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ABSTRACT

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) initiated the Marketing and Retention Recognition Program (MRRP) to identify and publicize innovative marketing and retention activities being implemented throughout the system. This report offers brief sketches of some of the exemplary projects identified by the MRRP. First, introductory material defines "marketing" and "retention," explains the "Law of Slow Learning in Marketing," looks at the impetus for and results of the emphasis on marketing and retention in the VCCS, and reviews the purposes of the MRRP. The next section outlines basic organizational principles for marketing and retention and highlights colleges determined to have particularly effective organizational structures. The next section focuses on exemplary high school outreach efforts, including programs to improve relations with high school personnel and to recruit high school graduates. Next, the report looks at the way VCCS institutions have used financial aid as a marketing tool; describes systems that have been developed to track prospective and enrolled students; and identifies several early warning, continuous alert, and follow-up intervention systems that have been developed to encourage student persistence. The next sections focus on exemplary efforts in the areas of media relations, economic development partnerships with business and industry, and marketing research. A list of the colleges and programs cited in the report is included, and numerous black and white photographs illustrate the text. (EJV)

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JC 870 298

The "Ins and Outs" of Marketing and Retention in Virginia's Community Colleges

Volume I

Exemplary Marketing and Retention
Practices in the Virginia Community College System

Edited by
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May, 1987

Acknowledgements

This volume is the product of a host of community college educators serving in a great variety of roles in the twenty-three Virginia community colleges, all dedicated to the proposition that the Virginia Community College System should provide the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia appropriate programs and services of the highest quality. The marketing and retention activities cited in this volume are varied but each focuses on some aspect of improving program quality, enhancing access, or assuring student success. Without the initiative, dedication, creativity, and generosity of these educators, there would have been no story to tell.

The compilation of the materials upon which this volume is based was accomplished by the Marketing and Retention Recognition Study Committee, an *ad hoc* committee of college personnel. This committee has met a number of times and members have participated in each of the college visitations. In addition, working teams from this committee have drafted and assembled detailed descriptions of the cited activities which are published in Volume 2 of this report. Members of this committee are:

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Introduction

What is Marketing?

Marketing is not just selling and promotion. In fact only a small portion of what will be highlighted in this volume has to do with either selling or promotion. In the community college setting, marketing is a carefully formulated program which[1]:

- is based on the managerial functions of analysis, planning, implementation, and control;
- results in carefully planned programs, not random actions;
- seeks to provide benefits that are needed and desired by those who attend;
- involves carefully selected targets rather than trying to be all things to all people;
- helps institutions to clarify their objectives and serve their target markets more efficiently;
- relies on designing the institution's offerings in terms of the target market's needs and desires—is client-oriented rather than seller-oriented; and
- utilizes and blends a set of tools called the marketing mix: program design, pricing, communications, and distribution.

But people, and institutions, do not come to understand marketing all at once. Philip Kotler, one of the leading scholars of public sector marketing, explains that marketing enlightenment grows slowly and tends to pass through five distinct stages. Kotler suggests that each of these stages offers so much potential for growth, and also for internal disruption, that colleges are wise to come to grips with marketing one step at a time.

The Law of Slow Learning in Marketing[2]

1. *Marketing is Advertising, Sales Promotion, and Publicity.* This is the most elementary level of marketing. While these are legitimate tools of marketing, colleges do not gain greatly by adopting the marketing tools of soap companies.

2. *Marketing is Smiling and a Friendly Atmosphere.* This is a first step toward being truly client-oriented.

3. *Marketing is Innovation.* Colleges realize that they are not in the business of providing only some narrowly defined activity; their offerings must emphasize serving client needs.

4. *Marketing is Positioning.* Colleges must consider what they do best. No institution is the best for all clients. The college must choose what offerings it can best provide and "take a position" in the market. Positioning aims to help potential clients know the real differences between competing institutions so that they can match themselves to the institution that can be of most value to them.

5. *Marketing is Market Analysis, Planning, and Control.* This is the essence of modern marketing. Institutions that employ this understanding of marketing are able to measure the potentials of their various markets, to develop market plans, and to assess the effectiveness of various alternatives.

What is Retention?

Retention, unlike marketing, is not something a college can "do." Retention is what happens when improved programs and services lead to student success. Retention does *not* result from permissiveness nor does it come from lowered standards. Relatively few of the students who do not persist leave because they are having academic difficulty. Successful colleges know that ultimately student retention is a by-product of student success and satisfaction. As they market themselves honestly and effectively; strive to improve the quality of campus programs and services; put the most caring and competent faculty, advisers, and staff in frontline contact positions; and work at matching student needs with responsive services and support, they reap the benefits of full classrooms. When students find that their needs are being met, that the college is facilitating their success in the classroom and helping them translate that success into their lives beyond the campus, education becomes a clear priority for them and they return to the campus. In short, retention is linked to student learning and the development of basic life competencies[3].

VCCS Marketing and Retention Emphasis.

The Virginia Community College System has had an active marketing and student retention emphasis since 1985. The System has sponsored activities in which premier experts in community college marketing and retention have provided instruction on the theory and practice of marketing and retention; it has provided opportunities for practitioners at the colleges to share effective programs with their colleagues across the state; and it has conducted and sponsored research in support of marketing and retention efforts. Thus, leaders of the Virginia Community College System have, by word and action, demonstrated their sense of the importance of marketing and student retention to the System.

Effects of Marketing and Retention Efforts.

These efforts have produced solid results. Previously full time equivalent student enrollment (FTES) in the Virginia Community College System had been declining steadily. The decline in FTES enrollment slowed dramatically in 1985-86 and in 1986-87, increased for the first time since 1982. In 1986 VCCS fall quarter headcount enrollment increased 7.5% while community colleges enrollment across the country increased by only 2.5%. College enrollment at all levels increased 1.2% across the country, and increased 1.3% in Virginia[4]. The marketing and retention efforts described in this volume, combined with a reduction in Virginia community college tuition, have contributed significantly to these enrollment increases.

Marketing and Retention Recognition Program.

The marketing and retention recognition program was conceived with the conviction that it would be productive to identify and publicize exciting, innovative marketing and retention activities that are being implemented throughout the Virginia Community College System. The purpose of this program is threefold:

1. to congratulate those responsible for developing and implementing the cited exemplary marketing and student retention activities;

2. to encourage others to consider adopting activities based on the successful programs presented in the publication; and

3. to bring recognition to the colleges of the Virginia Community College System, and the System as a whole, for the progress that has been made in marketing and student retention.

This publication is one result of that recognition program.

References

[1]Adapted from Philip Kotler and Karen F. A. Fox, *Strategic Marketing for Educational Institutions*, (Prentice-Hall, 1985), pp 7-8.

[2]Adapted from "The Law of Slow Learning in Marketing" in Philip Kotler, *Marketing Management*, 4th ed. (Prentice-Hall, 1980), pp 11-13.

[3]Adapted from Lee Noel, Randi Levitz, Diana Sauluri, and Associates, *Increasing Student Retention* (Jossey-Bass, 1985), pp xiii-xviii, 1-3.

[4]A discussion of Virginia community college enrollments, as compared to national and statewide trends, may be found in *The Effect of a Reduction in Tuition on Enrollment, Fall 1986* by Don Puyear, Virginia Community College System, 101 North 14th Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, January 1987.

Organizing for Marketing and Retention

As will be amply demonstrated in the examples that follow, there is no way to organize for marketing and retention. There are, however, some basic principles that seem to apply, no matter what type of organization is selected. These include the following:

•*There is commitment at the top.* In each instance the president and other top administrators are individually involved in marketing.

•*There is involvement throughout the institution.* This involvement may take different forms, but in each of the successful organizations it is real and it is essential.

•*There is a genuine focus on the client.* The real needs of current and potential students, and the real obstacles to attendance and success, are examined with care and diligence. Plans and programs are developed to respond to student needs, not administrator or faculty convenience.

•*There is a commitment to quality.* This concern for quality is expressed in programs and services of high quality. This concern is also expressed in the quality of publications and other communications between the college and potential students. You cannot communicate the image of a first rate college with third rate publications.

•*There is an emphasis on the management functions of analysis, planning, implementation, and control.* Activities, programs, and services are implemented only after careful analysis of needs, costs, and probable benefits. There is continuous monitoring of programs and services to assure that expected results are being obtained. There is periodic review of plans; lessons learned are considered as future plans are developed.

•*There is a recognition that resources are required.* In no case did we see lavish budgets or large staffs, but matters of high priority received sufficient resources to be successful.

The following colleges were determined to have particularly effective organizations for marketing and retention. They were also chosen for their variety and for the diversity of the community colleges involved. They include two of the largest, most complex multi-campus institutions in the System. They also include smaller colleges that are effectively addressing the challenges of marketing and retention.

New River Community College

New River Community College is a medium-sized comprehensive college in Southwest Virginia. Its 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 3,248 students, with 1,664 FTES. Key elements in its organization for marketing and recruitment include the following:

•The *Recruitment and Retention Implementation Project* (RRIP) Team was established in 1985, replacing an earlier Recruitment and Retention Committee.

•The RRIP Team, chaired by the Coordinator of Admissions and Records, includes representatives from each functional area of the college. Faculty members from each division are included on a yearly rotating basis.

•The RRIP Team is responsible both for generating recruitment and retention activities and for implementing them.

•The RRIP Team functions as a standing committee of the college, minutes of all meetings are distributed widely, and the RRIP Committee Director is invited to the President's Cabinet to review minutes and make recommendations.

•The college reports that "The RRIP Committee has become a 'moving force' at NRCC. Its success can be attributed to the commitment and support from the President and his Cabinet, representation from all functional areas of the College, and communication through the College Cabinet/Council structure." The college attributes its Fall Quarter, 1986, FTES enrollment increase of 16% to the effectiveness of this committee.

Northern Virginia Community College

Northern Virginia Community College is a large, urban, comprehensive community college comprised of five campuses and an extended learning institute. Its 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 34,312 students with 15,871 FTES. Milestones in the development of NVCC's Marketing Plan include:

•*1982-83* The 1982-1990 Educational Master Plan called for the development of strategies to market the college's programs and services. A Marketing Design Team was established. It prepared marketing guidelines and conducted a marketing audit. A college-wide marketing plan for 1983-84 was prepared with four areas of emphasis: Product Analysis, Enrollment Actualization, Research of Internal and External Markets, and Communication.

•*1983-84* The Marketing Design Team was reappointed. It was charged with monitoring implementation of the 1983-84 Marketing Plan and the development of a 1984-85 plan. The marketing base was broadened with four President's Marketing Workshops with the theme, "Marketing—Be A Part of It." All members of administration, faculty, and staff were invited to one or the other of the day-long sessions conducted by Dennis Johnson, a nationally known marketing consultant.

•*1984-85* The 1984-85 plan reflected a growing college-wide commitment to marketing.

•*1985-86* A Marketing Advisory Committee was established. Marketing was becoming institutionalized.

•*1986-87* A Marketing Review Committee was established to serve as a steering committee for reviewing marketing activities of the college.

Marketing is now an ongoing component of the organizations and programs of NVCC; personnel at all levels are actively involved.

Paul D. Camp Community College

Paul D. Camp is a relatively small comprehensive community college serving a rural region with some industry. Its 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 1,298 students with 592 FTES.

•In 1985 a Marketing Task Force was established. Membership included the Administrative Assistant to the President, College Business Manager, Coordinator of Admissions and Records, Director of Continuing Education, Audio-Visual Technician, and two faculty members from each of the two College divisions.

•The task force conducted preliminary research for a situation analysis. It considered:

1. A survey of strengths and weaknesses as seen by students;
2. A structured analysis of programs by the administrative staff;
3. A community attitude survey; and
4. An analysis of "best selling" courses and programs.

•The task force introduced marketing concepts to the college community with a presentation during the 1985 Fall Orientation week. The presentation was based on

1. Product
2. Development
3. Communication
4. Consumers
5. Campus

•An expanded task force presented the first formal plan for marketing in the Spring of 1986. One faculty member was given release time to work with the task force. Other task force activities included the following:

1. A full day, all-college retreat was held to begin internal relations audit to identify marketing objectives.

2. A modified Delphi technique of repeated ranking of previously identified priorities was used with all employees to refine objectives.

3. The initial concept for visual image campaign seeking design suggestions from all employees was presented during the 1986 Fall orientation week.

4. The complete package of college seal, logotype, colors, and symbols was adopted in the Spring of 1987.

Rappahannock Community College

Rappahannock Community College is a rural multi-campus institution. Its 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 1,437 students with 632 FTES on two campuses.

•A Marketing Task Force was established in June, 1985, charged with developing a formal marketing plan emphasizing the long range view. Membership was equally divided among the administration, faculty and classified staff.

•The Task Force recognized the need for self-education on marketing and how it related to the mission of the college.

•An early task was to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses.

•The task force divided its work into three stages:

1. Institutional operations;
2. Improving client-centeredness;
3. Conceptualization of the Rappahannock Community College Product.

•Recommendations from the task force ranged from administrative reorganization

Dennis Johnson presented workshops for VCCS leaders and at a number of colleges.

of the college to creation of a visual image campaign.

•The college attributes the increase in part-time student enrollment to the highest level in the college's history, in part, to the work of the task force.

Southside Virginia Community College

Southside Virginia Community College is a rural multi-campus institution. Its 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 1,852 students with 976 FTES on two campuses, a "campus without walls," and several off-campus sites. The service area is very large: it includes all or part of ten counties and two cities; the two campuses are 42 miles apart. Features of SsVCC's organization for marketing include the following:

•The *College Council* serves as the college's marketing committee. It is made up of the President, the President's staff (deans, Director of Admissions, Records, and Institutional Research, and the Assistant to the President), division chairs, Director of Continuing Education, faculty representative from each campus, classified staff representative from each campus, and the Public Information Officer.

•The Council meets at least quarterly.

•There is an annual plan with quarterly progress reports. Persons responsible for action steps are also responsible to report on achievements to the College Council.

The annual marketing plan is developed as follows:

•During each summer, the President's Staff submits a draft plan to the College Council for comment. Each member of the Council is responsible for taking the plan back to their constituency and seeking input.

•The final plan is recommended by the College Council to the President for adoption. Upon approval by the President, it becomes the annual marketing plan.

•Enrollment goals, by high school and by program, are recommended by the President's staff, are subject to the same review as described above, and are finally approved by the President.

Tidewater Community College

Tidewater Community College is one of the larger colleges in the VCCS. It has three campuses and had a 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment of 15,605 students with 7,636 FTES. Its region contains a large number of military installations; nearly 30% of the population are active duty or retired military personnel, or their dependents. Tidewater Community College is organized for marketing as follows:

•A college-wide marketing committee is chaired by the Dean of Instructional and Student Services. The committee includes representatives of the the District Office and of each campus. Persons responsible for functional areas related to marketing are included on the committee.

•The Marketing Committee, as a group, is responsible to:

1. Analyze area and college student demographics;
2. Establish committee goals and objectives;
3. Determine strategies to meet the goals and objectives; and
4. Provide general guidance and direction to the college's marketing efforts.

•The committee accomplishes its goals and objectives through the work of six subcommittees, which were responsible for:

1. Area Demographics/Student Markets/Student Enrollment.
2. Print Material Review.
3. Media Relations/Promotional Activities.
4. High School Outreach.
5. Application/Class Schedule Materials.
6. College Logo/Slogans.

The college reports that the efforts of the Marketing Committee have led to the enhancement of some practices, the improvement of others, have caused increased awareness of the role of marketing in promoting the institution and its programs, and have engendered a greater sensitivity to students and their needs.

President Ficker of Mountain Empire Community College expounds on the college's marketing plan.

High School Outreach

The comprehensive high school and the comprehensive community college work on the basis of a not-so-visible or dramatic definition of excellence. They seek the development of a highly diverse potential in all students. Certainly these schools and colleges want a well-prepared entering student. However, there are many kinds of talents and many kinds of excellence. These institutions focus on progress in learning and in value added: where was the student upon entry and did he or she make progress?

...Comprehensive high schools and comprehensive community, technical, and junior colleges *must be* concerned with improving the educational program and performance of the ordinary student *along with* the baccalaureate degree-bound student. It is not an either/or proposition!

•High School outreach in the Virginia Community College System is characterized by careful nurturing of a cooperative relationship between the community college and the high schools in the college's region. There is a mutual recognition that the comprehensive high school and the comprehensive community college have much in common, as indicated by the above quotations from Dale Parnell's *The Neglected Majority*.

•High School outreach universally involves developing a good working relationship between the community college and high school guidance counselors, but the more effective programs go much further. They also involve faculty working with high school teachers; they involve appropriate community college administrators working with district superintendents and high school principals; they involve collaborative arrangements and articulation agreements; and they often involve a service provided the schools by the community college. (Financial Aid as a Marketing Tool, described later in this volume, is an example of community colleges providing a major service to area high schools.)

•Virtually all of the colleges visited had effective high school outreach programs of one sort or another. The following examples of especially effective programs are by no means exhaustive. The *Northern Virginia Community College* and the *Southside Virginia Community College* programs are cited for their comprehensiveness; the *Piedmont Virginia Community College Area High School Counseling Partnerships*, the *Germanna Community College Contact Team*, and the *Rappahannock Community College Prominent Citizen Contact Campaign* programs are included as exemplary innovations. They are intended to spotlight some truly exemplary programs and they are intended to provide food for thought.

Northern Virginia Community College

NVCC (or NOVA, as it is known locally) manages most of its high school outreach efforts through the five campuses, with each campus being responsible for the schools in its geographic area. Individual initiative is encouraged, so the specific programs at one campus may vary from those on another. Successful programs are shared in college-wide meetings. Representative programs, listed below, demonstrate the variety and comprehensiveness of the college's program.

•*Counselor Contacts.*

1. Individual counselors serve as Liaison Coordinator for each school.
2. Liaison coordinators maintain an information folder on each school which contains enrollment and demographic information, names and telephone numbers of contact persons in the school, and marketing objectives concerning the school as well as a record of previous contacts. Any person (counselor, faculty, administrator) making a contact at the school can be quickly informed about activities involving the college and the school; each contact is to be noted in the folder.

•*Participation in school-sponsored programs.* College personnel participate in all high school-sponsored college night programs.

•*Presenting programs and workshops for high school (and younger) students* on such topics as Jobs for the Eighties/Job Fairs/Planning for Financial Aid for College/Mass Media Workshop for Yearbook Editors.

•*One campus has "adopted" an elementary school.*

•*College faculty members serve as guest lecturers* in high schools.

•*Student ambassadors* (present NOVA students who are graduates of the high school) accompany NOVA counselors on some school visits.

•*Direct mail* letter is sent from the president to each graduating senior.

Southside Virginia Community College

Southside Virginia Community College has a vigorous program of high school outreach. SsVCC considers it to be a year-round program that is "everybody's job." The following are among the activities associated with high school outreach at SsVCC:

•*Direct mail* includes nine letters: (1) It's Not Too Late; (2) Winter Quarter Restarts; (3) College Transfer; (4) Health and Public Service; (5) President's letter with General Information Brochure; (6) President's letter with Outcomes Brochure to parents; (7) Business Programs; (8) Technologies; and (9) It's Not Too Late Mailing with General Information Brochure. Also, the president sends a letter and the Academic Quality Brochure to parents of high school Juniors obtained from the student search list.

•*Personal contacts* by President, president's staff, division chairs, faculty, and counselors with division superintendents and high school principals, counselors, and faculty.

•*High school visitation* by counselors, student activities assistants, and part-time recruiters.

•*Bringing high school students to an SsVCC campus.* Examples of activities designed to bring potential students onto an SsVCC campus include:

1. Spend a Day at Southside;
2. Hosting area high school College Night, and Career Fair programs;
3. Battle of the Brains contest for area high schools; and
4. Math contest.

•*Articulation agreements* assuring students credit for vocational skills learned in high school programs have proven to be effective recruiting tools.

•*Cooperative arrangements* with area high schools are productive. Examples include:

1. Offering community college courses in the high school for talented and gifted students with the school system paying tuition and book costs;
2. Busing high school vocational students to the campus for occupational courses, with school system paying tuition and book costs;
3. Conducting summer school for some county school systems;
4. Special summer programs for high school (and younger) students.

Piedmont Virginia Community College Area High School Counseling Partnerships

Piedmont Virginia Community College is a single campus comprehensive community college with a 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment of 4,139, with 1,636 FTES. The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County are the two most populous political subdivisions in the college's region.

In 1984 PVCC and Charlottesville High School initiated a joint counseling partnership aimed at developing a mutual effort to assist undecided high school students with career choices. Key features of this partnership are:

•The counselor is a PVCC employee; Charlottesville reimburses the college for a portion of the salary.

•The counselor normally works at the high school three days a week and at the college two days a week. At the high school the counselor works with undecided juniors and seniors regarding their post-secondary career plans. At the college the counselor provides counseling services and maintains currency with academic advisement of incoming students.

•The program was extended to Albemarle County high schools in 1986. The program is similar to that of Charlottesville High School except that the counselor spends four days at the two county high schools and one day at the college.

•The program has proven to be effective in at least two ways. The presence of the PVCC counselor in the high school is a good recruitment tool. Even more important may be the high retention that appears to have come, in substantial part, from the availability to the college student of a college counselor that they knew, and had a positive experience with, in their high school experience.

Germanna Community College Contact Teams

Germanna Community College is a single campus comprehensive community college with a 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment of 2,212, with 898 FTES. The purpose of the *Contact Team* program is to provide an outreach effort into high schools located in Germanna's service region and thereby improve communication between the high schools and the college. Key elements of this concept include:

•The president is the primary contact person for division superintendents; the dean is the primary contact person for high school principals; contact team members are the primary contact between college staff and high school staff.

•There is to be a Contact Team for each high school in the area.

•The team members are college faculty or staff members, all volunteers, who live in the high school's community. This makes it convenient for a team member to drop by and visit, or leave materials, on the way to or from the college.

•One or more team members make contact with the school at least once every other week, at a time convenient to the high school contact. The purpose may be to deliver catalogs, quarterly class schedules, financial aid information, or other good news about Germanna. The Contact Team may maintain a bulletin board at the high school.

•The Contact Team program has been in effect for about a year. It is too soon to have objective data on the results, but team members are convinced that communication with the high schools is markedly improved. All but one school in the service region is currently being served by a contact team.

Rappahannock Community College Prominent Citizen Contact Campaign

Rappahannock Community College recently developed a *Prominent Citizen Contact Campaign* which is reported to be already paying dividends.

•In each county of the college service region, a prominent citizen (the commonwealth attorney, a doctor, a bank president, etc.) has volunteered to write a personal letter to each high school graduate in his or her county who has demonstrated the potential for academic success but who has not yet decided to attend college. This list of students is provided by the high school.

•A similar approach is being planned for students whose interests and abilities are geared toward vocational programs. In this case the prominent citizen would be one who has risen through vocational ranks.

[1]Dale Parnell, *The Neglected Majority*, (The Community College Press, 1985), pp 5-6, 17. Emphasis is from the text.

Financial Aid as a Marketing Tool

•Many potential students dismiss their chances for college because they think that they cannot afford the cost. Financial aid can make the critical difference for many of these prospects. It is, therefore, important that high school students in the college's service region be aware of the availability of financial aid to attend the community college.

•Financial aid is a very technical, rapidly changing field. Many high schools, especially smaller schools in less populous rural areas, are not able to fully train a person for financial aid counseling. Such schools are likely to welcome competent assistance.

•Community colleges can establish a very positive relationship with their area high schools by providing them a needed service with "no strings attached." Financial aid workshops and individual financial aid counseling can be such a service, as the colleges in Southwest Virginia have demonstrated. *Mountain Empire Community College* has a particularly comprehensive program of service to area high schools focusing on financial aid. The programs at *Virginia Highlands Community College* and *Southwest Virginia Community College*, while less comprehensive than the MECC effort, have also proven to be quite effective.

Mountain Empire Community College

Mountain Empire Community College is a comprehensive community college serving the westernmost tip of Virginia. The 1986 Fall Quarter enrollment was 3,862 students and 1,517 FTES. The economy of the college's service region is highly dependent upon coal mining; unemployment is currently very high. For this reason, financial aid is particularly important if students from this region are to have access to higher education.

MECC has been using financial aid as a marketing tool since 1980, when basic elements of the program described below were initiated. The objectives of the program include the following:

1. Gaining recruitment accessibility to high school seniors through providing financial aid application workshops to all local high schools, and

2. Removing the financial barrier to educational access through increased availability of financial aid to both traditional and nontraditional students.

This program consists of one component focused on high school recruitment and another component directed toward nontraditional students. All college personnel involved in these programs receive annual specialized training in financial aid programs.

•*High School Recruitment Component.* The high school recruitment component of this program includes the following activities:

1. *Guidance Counselor Workshops* are conducted annually to update high school counselors on federal, state, and local financial aid programs. A lunch is served and a guest speaker makes a presentation on a contemporary topic in counseling.

2. *How-to Workshops for High School Seniors* are conducted at the high schools during the months of December through February. Students are given pointers on filling out the applications, and the form is presented item-by-item. Students receive the college's toll-free number for future assistance. This service, and all that are described below, is available no matter which college the student is contemplating attending.

3. *Parent Workshops* follow the student workshops by about two weeks. These are generally conducted in the evening at

each high school.

4. *Computerized Needs Assessment Workshops* are conducted in the high schools after the students and their parents have had several weeks to fill out the forms. The student is given a printout of the needs analysis and it is explained by one of the trained personnel from the college.

5. Several *direct mailings* are made to each high school senior in the service area and to his/her parents. Brochures are included which provide information about MECC—its programs and the relatively low cost of attendance.

6. A *Confidential Report* regarding recent graduates who enrolled at MECC, and the financial aid awarded, is provided each high school counseling department.

•*Nontraditional Student Recruitment Component.* MECC has increased its nontraditional student enrollment each year since 1979. These increases have relied heavily upon the availability of financial aid to help pay college costs.

1. *Town Meetings* are publicized in each community every quarter prior to registration. MECC realizes that it must first locate the funding to pay for the student's tuition and books before talking to them about which classes to take.

2. Each summer *GED Mailing Lists* are obtained, containing everyone who passed the GED test in the service region during the previous twelve months. A special brochure is mailed to each person on this list encouraging them to continue their education at MECC. Since most GED recipients in the area show financial need, financial aid eligibility is heavily stressed.

Other Programs

•*Virginia Highlands Community College* is a single campus comprehensive community college in Southwestern Virginia. Enrollment in the 1986 Fall Quarter was 1,759 students and 1,090 FTES. The region served by VHCC is out of the coal fields and has a more diversified economic base than that of MECC. The main feature of the VHCC program is a *Financial Aid Workshop* for seniors and parents at each high school in the service area, where information on filling out the Financial Aid Form is provided. All types of local, state, and federal financial aid are discussed. In the winter of 1987, 14 workshops were conducted for 550 seniors and 45 parents.

•*Southwest Virginia Community College* is a single campus comprehensive community college with an enrollment of 4,762 students and 2,310 FTES. Like MECC, the economy of the SwVCC service region is heavily dependent upon coal mining. Since many students do not have their financial aid money available at the beginning of the quarter, SwVCC has instituted a vigorous program of short-term loans to supplement the more traditional financial aid programs.

Prospect and Enrolled Student Tracking

•When a person makes an enquiry of the college, requests literature, or otherwise expresses an interest in one of the programs of the college, that person is much more likely than a member of the general populace to be a potential student. Capturing information about the person at the time of the initial enquiry and responding with one or more follow-up contacts can be a highly effective recruitment strategy.

•Further, appropriate letters, or other personalized communication from the college, at critical points in the student's progress can provide strong reinforcement that can be an important factor in retention. Critical points can be positive, such as being admitted to a curriculum or achieving honor roll status, or negative, such as academic warning.

•These contacts lend themselves to automation, providing the automatic system is developed with sensitivity and is carefully monitored.

•In addition to providing effective tracking and follow-up with current prospects or students, these automated systems can be designed to capture and report important demographic information for marketing planning, and other information of value for evaluating academic programs, services or marketing activities.

•Several colleges have developed systems of applicant or enrolled student tracking; but one, *Thomas Nelson Community College*, has developed a *Student Contact System* that is comprehensive, fully automated, and proven to be effective. It has been determined by the Task Force to be exemplary.

•Other systems determined by the committee to be worthy of special note include the *Admissions Tracking System* at *Lord Fairfax Community College*, *Marketing by Direct Mail* at *Virginia Highlands Community College*, and an emerging program at *John Tyler Community College*.

The TNCC Student Contact System

•includes market research as an integral component;

•captures basic information regarding interests of prospect at the time of the initial enquiry;

•tracks the applicant from initial contact, through curriculum placement, enrollment, stop-out, re-enrollment, graduation, and beyond;

•generates, at appropriate times, fifteen different personal letters individually signed by the president, dean of instruction, dean of students, division chairman, coordinator of admissions and records, or coordinator of counseling services;

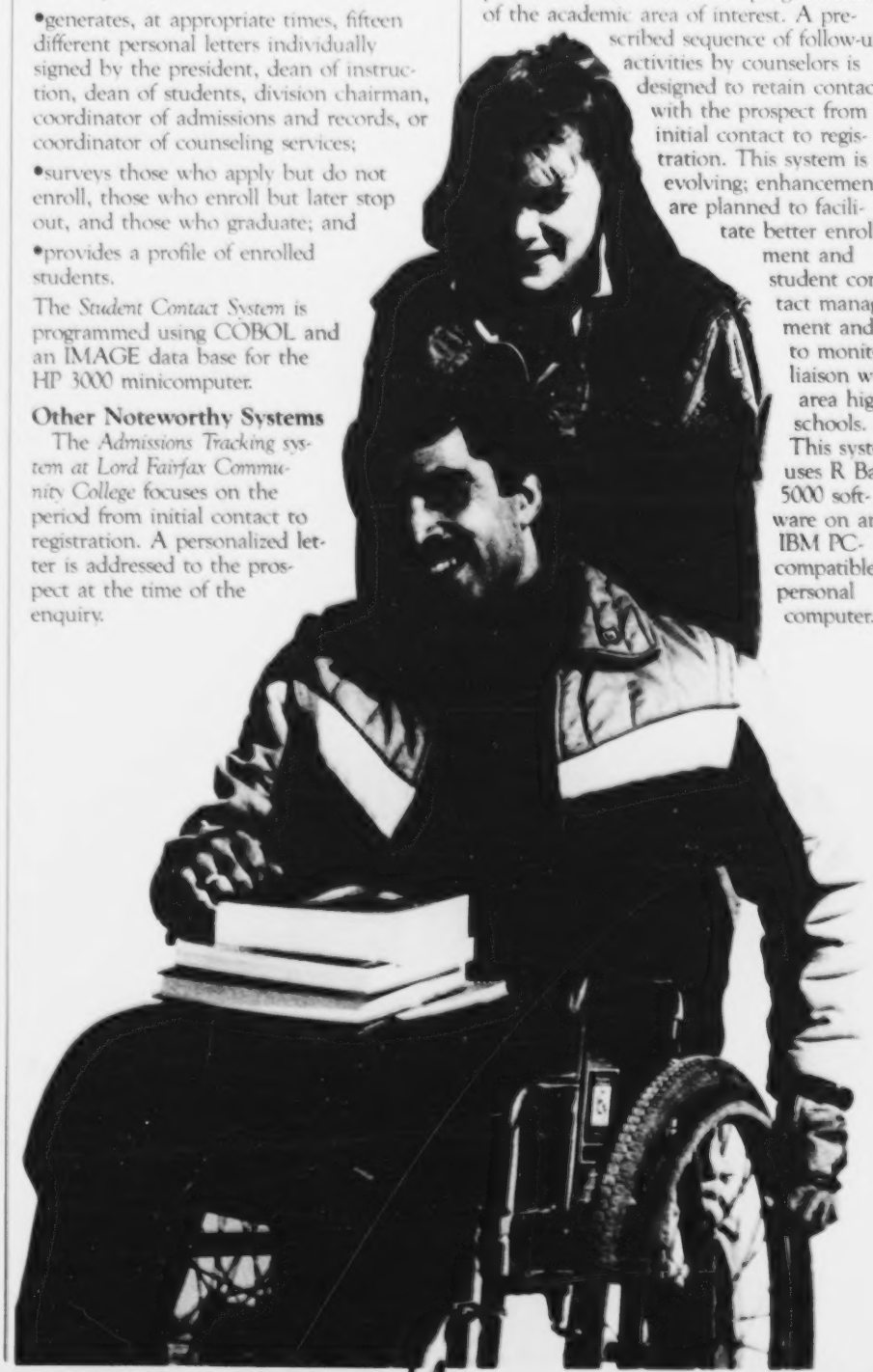
•surveys those who apply but do not enroll, those who enroll but later stop out, and those who graduate; and

•provides a profile of enrolled students.

The *Student Contact System* is programmed using COBOL and an IMAGE data base for the HP 3000 minicomputer.

Other Noteworthy Systems

The *Admissions Tracking system at Lord Fairfax Community College* focuses on the period from initial contact to registration. A personalized letter is addressed to the prospect at the time of the enquiry. A week later the prospect receives another personalized letter from the program head of the academic area of interest. A prescribed sequence of follow-up activities by counselors is designed to retain contact with the prospect from initial contact to registration. This system is evolving; enhancements are planned to facilitate better enrollment and student contact management and to monitor liaison with area high schools. This system uses R Base 5000 software on an IBM PC-compatible personal computer.



(Top) Direct mail letters are entered into the computer at VHCC.

(Bottom) Summer College at NVCC.

The *Marketing by Direct Mail* system at *Virginia Highlands Community College* supplements the high school recruitment program of the college. The stated goals for this system include the following:

- To write a direct mailing, microcomputer program to track the admissions status and enrollment of each prospective student who has indicated an interest in attending VHCC.
- To establish follow-up mailing lists for the different types of prospective students.
- To identify marketing activities for the direct mailing program.
- To investigate ways to provide information to faculty and student services personnel.

This system is programmed in BASIC for the APPLE IIe computer.

John Tyler Community College recently received a Title III Special Needs Grant. One component of this grant-funded program is the development of a comprehensive plan for student retention. While this plan is still being developed, a computerized tracking system of curriculum placed students who took a college-developed placement test is being utilized on a trial basis. This system will allow the college to develop a data base to accomplish the following purposes:

1. analyze the characteristics of students who stay and students who leave the college;
2. track the students and produce appropriate letters to the students at important points in their academic career;
3. match students with faculty advisors; and
4. assist in analyzing the effectiveness of college programs and services.

The total JTCC program has promise; it will be interesting to follow this program to see what results it ultimately produces.

Intervention Systems

•The first few weeks of college are the most critical in determining student persistence. To get students to stay you must get them started right.

•Prompt, assertive intervention with students who demonstrate behavior likely to lead to academic difficulty has been shown to be an important component of successful retention efforts.

•Involving faculty, and others in daily contact with students, in promptly identifying behaviors that may lead to difficulty and providing them with an easy, effective means of alerting student development professionals of the problem are key components in successful intervention systems. Such behaviors may include excessive absences from class, excessive instances of being tardy to class, poor test grades, failure to prepare daily work, and other indicators of academic or personal difficulty.

•Promptly contacting the student with potential problems, actively providing support services, and enabling the student to take responsibility for his/her own behavior are components of successful intervention systems.

•Providing faculty and others who are involved with quick, positive feedback regarding the actions taken in response to their alert notice, and the results of those actions, is essential to their continued involvement.

•The Early Alert system developed by Miami-Dade Community College in Florida is one of the first successful attempts to automate an intervention system; the exemplary *Continuous Alert* program developed by *Danville Community College* was inspired by the Miami-Dade program.

•Danville Community College's program was extended by *New River Community College*. A number of colleges, including *Central Virginia Community College* and *John Tyler Community College*, cited here, also use the Continuous Alert system with only slight local modifications. Other colleges, including Lord Fairfax Community College, have developed other systems for the same basic purposes, and *Northern Virginia Community College* has a specialized system for its Extended Learning Institute home study and television course students.

Continuous Alert Systems

The Original System at Danville Community College.

•Initiated in 1984.

•Identifies ten specific areas of concern in three main categories of learning inhibitors in students: attendance, academic, and social.

•Allows faculty members and others in daily contact with students to easily refer a student to the Director of Student Development for assistance.

•Students are immediately contacted by a student development professional by means of an appropriate letter or telephone call. A meeting is held with the student and an appropriate college official at which time an action plan is developed.

•All action plans are concluded by the end of each quarter.

•Person making referral is kept informed throughout the process.

Outcomes:

•Faculty members have a systematic way of responding to student problems with an effective process that gives them immediate

feedback.

•Students in trouble are identified quickly and provided proper resources.

•The student has positive and clear recognition that the college wants success.

•An opportunity is provided to deal with problems before a crisis arises and when a range of alternatives exist.

•Integration of instructional and student development activities occurs.

Implementation:

•Integrated data base and word processor system programmed in APPLESOFT BASIC under PRODOS operating system for use on Apple IIe computer with extended 80-column card.

•Computer system logs data on identified students, tracks their progress through several stages of contacts and interviews, and generates up to thirty-six different letters and memoranda.

•Computer system also provides statistical information on such things as the frequency of various types of referrals, frequency of contacts, and time between contacts.

Results:

•Full time curricular student retention from Fall Quarter to Spring Quarter has increased from 74% before continuous Alert to 82% in 1985-86.

•By analyzing continuous alert data, college personnel have been able to identify specific problem areas and to develop workshops to better prepare high school seniors for their college experience.

Modifications at New River Community College.

New River Community College uses the Continuous Alert System much the same way as Danville Community College. However, NRCC has added two features that may be of interest.

•The computer programs have been converted to run on IBM PC-compatible personal computers.

•Faculty members are given a modified class roster to use in making referrals. They no longer have to fill out a special referral form; a few check marks on the roster accomplish the same end. A replacement roster is provided each time one is used. NRCC reports that this modification has dramatically increased faculty participation in their Continuous Alert system.

Other Users.

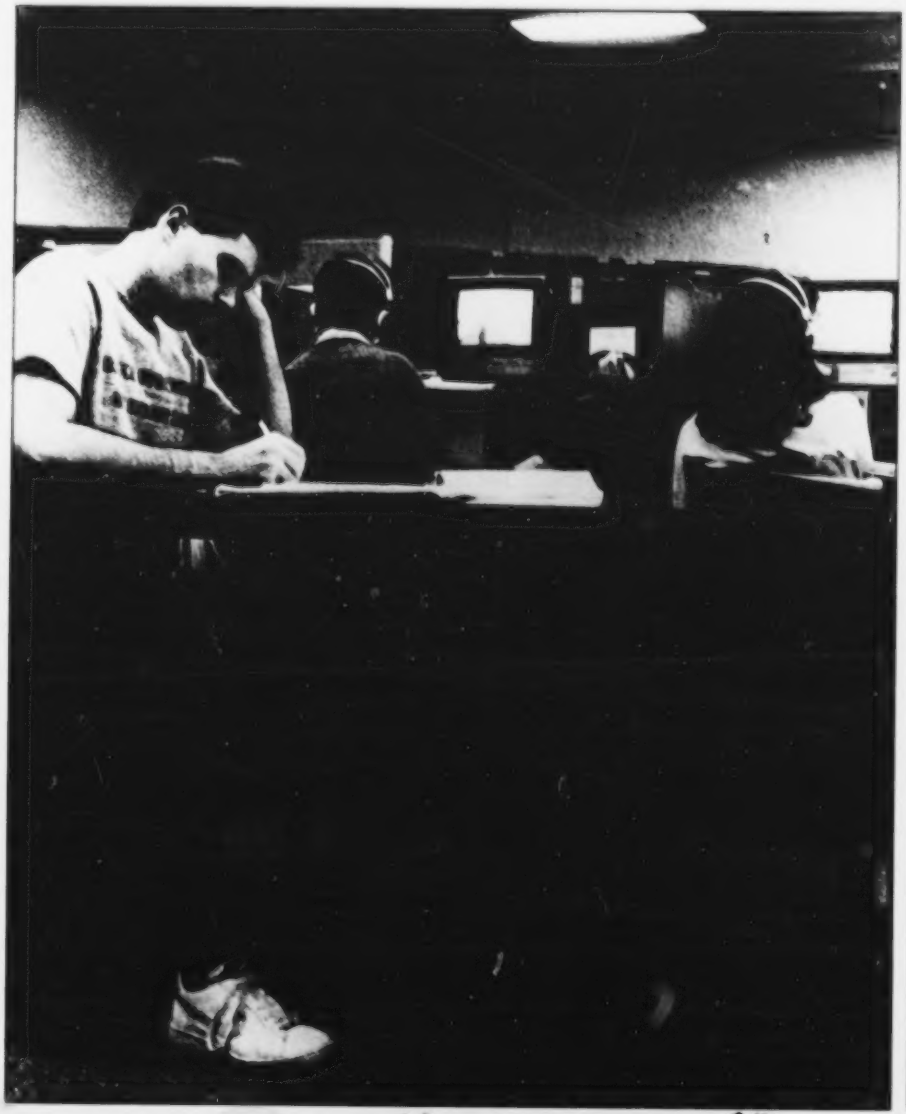
Central Virginia Community College uses the Continuous Alert System essentially as designed by Danville Community College. CVCC has, however, developed three-part NCR (no carbon required) forms for the faculty referral form, the student action plan, and for follow-up efforts. *John Tyler Community College* also uses Continuous Alert, but uses a Counselor Assistance Form in place of an action card. A number of other colleges throughout the VCCS report that they are using, or are about to use, Continuous Alert.

The Follow-Up Desk (FUD)

Other colleges have developed intervention systems not related to the continuous alert effort. The *Follow-Up Desk* (FUD) system at *Lord Fairfax Community College* was noted by the committee for special consideration. The FUD program is based on the same philosophy and concern as Continuous Alert. It is an automated follow-up system, using RBase 5000 software, in its first year of operation. The program design provides a computer-generated check sheet for each instructor. The returned check sheet is used by the counselor to develop an intervention most appropriate to a student's needs. Data are maintained in the system, and each instructor receives an automated report of each referral's activity at the end of the quarter. In addition, each instructor receives a follow-up report immediately upon completion of the counselor's contact with the referred student.

Automated Instructional Management System (AIM)

The *Northern Virginia Community College* Extended Learning Institute (ELI) has computerized and modified the early alert system it first put into place in the early 1970's. ELI offers continuous enrollment for its home study and television courses, making traditional alert systems difficult to use. ELI's computerized enrollment system (which uses dBase II software) has an early intervention feature so that faculty can easily identify students who have not started or who are having trouble with their course work. Faculty members receive weekly printouts listing students at various stages of their enrollment so that their progress can be checked and appropriate contacts made. The system is flexible so that faculty can designate specific checkpoints that correspond to their course requirements. In addition to contacts by telephone, faculty members can get mailing labels for specific groups of students in their courses to facilitate communication by mail.



Media Relations

As used in this volume, Media Relations includes several related concepts:

•first, it includes all activities the college uses to develop positive relations with media personnel;

•second, it includes the preparation and dissemination of appropriate news releases on the college for both the print and electronic media;

•third, it includes effective uses of visual image and consistent themes in college publications; and

•finally, it includes the imaginative use of paid and donated announcements and other means of placing the college's message before potential students.

The examples cited below are representative of media relations the committee considered to be unusually effective. Cited examples were selected because of the comprehensiveness of the college's program or because of some unique aspect of the program, and to illustrate that effective media relations is not a function of college size or type.

Northern Virginia Community College has a vigorous, professional media relations program. Among the more unusual features of the NOVA program are:

•A consistent visual theme is incorporated into college publications and paid announcements. One recent theme included the use of a student in profile. It was used effectively in a number of publications. The purpose is to help readers recognize that the annoucement is about NOVA even before they read it.

•In 1985 NOVA pioneered the use of the *Campus Voice* publication for placing information regarding the college in the hands of all high school seniors in the service area. Reprints of the college's section from *Campus Voice* were also used as a college viewbook. Several additional VCCS colleges made similar uses of *Campus Voice* in 1986.

•The college makes use of both direct mail and schedule publication in local area papers to inform the public of course offerings.

•NOVA produces numerous publications for specific target audiences. For example, *Impact and Outcomes*, a brochure presenting student outcomes and the impact of NOVA on the community, was produced for state and local decision makers.

•An average of 20 radio spots are placed throughout the week before registration. They were broadcast during morning drive time, midday, evening drive time, and night time. Both paid announcements and public service spots are used.

•The college makes effective use of free cable channels for both promotion and class delivery. It produces a regular television "magazine" program for cablecast on seven different local cables.

•For the past two years the college has sponsored a large display in a local mall. A number of different exhibits feature various programs and services of the various campuses and the college as a whole.

Southside Virginia Community College also had a very comprehensive media program. In addition to the usual college and program brochures, catalog, news releases, radio public service announcements and paid spots, and a speakers bureau, all of which are used extensively to communicate with the college's public, the college has a number of unusual features to its media program. These include the following:

•The class schedule is printed in tabloid form with a different feature story each quarter on present or former students, board members, faculty, staff, or administrators.

•The college distributes grocery bag flyers to stores and placemats to restaurants.

•Street banners, sponsored by local merchants, are flown each quarter during registration periods.

SsVCC's media relations program has proven to be exceptionally effective. Seldom does a local newpaper (and there are several) not have some mention of the college in each issue.

Blue Ridge Community College has an annual social for representatives of the media. There is no agenda other than an expression of gratitude, and no story is expected in return. Other features of BRCC's program include the following:

•Gift certificates are sold in the amount of $17.00 each (the tuition cost of 1 credit) and are promoted through the course schedule publication as wedding, graduation, birthday, and Christmas gift ideas.

•BRCC's speakers bureau has a large number of speakers listed with topics designed specifically for high school age students. Over 1,000 copies of the speakers bureau booklets were distributed to teachers, counselors, and administrators in the local schools, and to representatives of business, industry, and the media.

John Tyler Community College also has a comprehensive media relations program. Among the more unusual features of this program are the following:

•The college uses the theme *Sometimes Happiness is Just a Matter of Degree*. This theme is incorporated into the visual image of the college and is used on posters, general college brochures, the quarterly schedule of classes, and in a video recruiting program. The 10-minute video shows how a student moves through the college from enquiry to matriculation.

•Faculty in the Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Allied Health Division contribute an article each month to the Health column of a section of the Sunday *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Paul D. Camp Community College recently used the unveiling of its new college seal as a way of focusing media attention on its mission and programs. The unveiling ceremony was attended by prominent citizens, the Chancellor of the VCCS, and a broad representation of the press.

(Top left) An annual vaudeville show at Lord Fairfax affords considerable media attention.

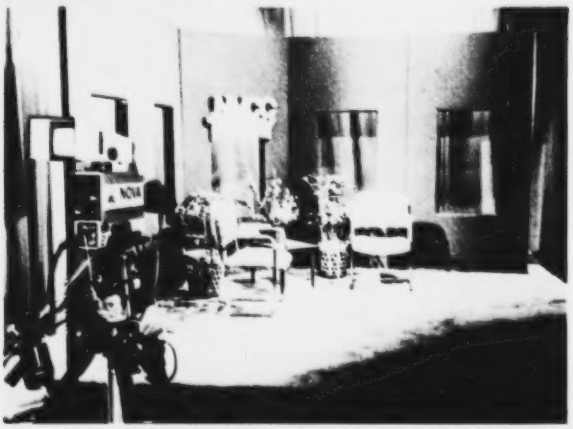
(Middle left) The set of "NVCC Today," a production of Northern Virginia Community College, provides college information to TV viewers.

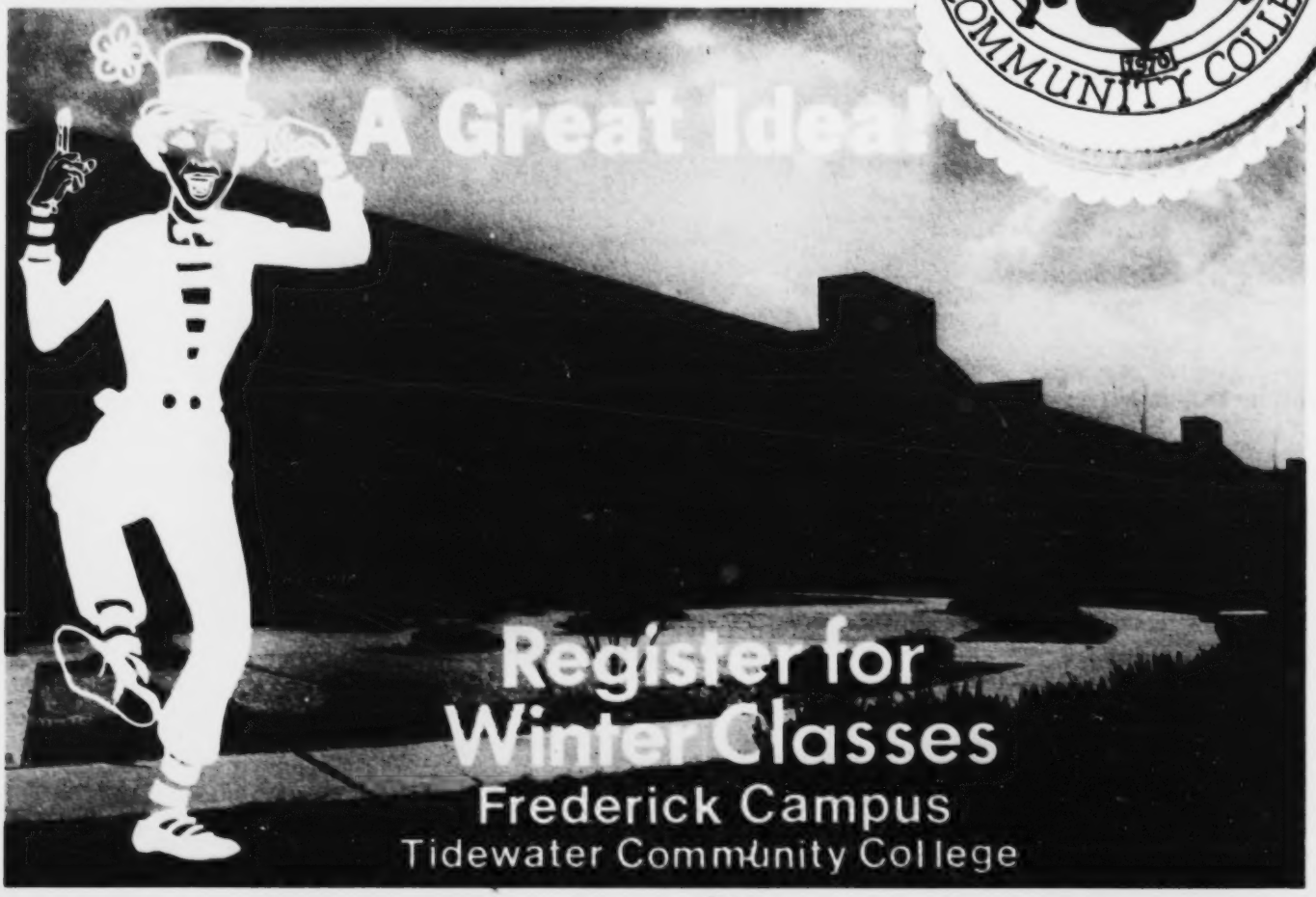
(Top right) Viewers "tune in" to speakers at the NVCC Telecomference Center.

(Middle right) The new college seal at Paul D. Camp was unveiled at a large community reception.

(Bottom) TCC registration posters are distributed throughout the region.

FAIRFAX FOLLIES




A Great Idea!
PAUL D. CAMP
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
1970
Register for
Winter Classes
Frederick Campus
Tidewater Community College

Partnerships for Economic Development

Community colleges in Virginia play a vital role in economic development within the state. This has long been an integral component of the mission of the VCCS, and it will increase in importance in the years to come. The relationship between economic development and a work force trained in the latest technology and methodology is becoming more apparent all the time. Virtually all of the colleges in the VCCS have been active in serving business and industry needs. The committee found it difficult to select only a few colleges for recognition in this area. Those selected were chosen either because they had unusually comprehensive programs, or because there was some component of their program that was unusually innovative. Again, the size of the college was not found to be a major factor in its ability to be responsive to its community.

Technology Transfer: An Exciting New Program

An exciting new role for Virginia's community colleges is emerging through a new partnership between the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) and the VCCS. Community colleges will become the liaison between business and industry, on one hand, and the whole of higher education on the other. A full-time position will be established at each college for a technology transfer agent who will be responsible for working with local industries to identify their needs for educational and technical assistance. The technology transfer agent will then act as a broker. If the community college can meet the need, it will. If the need is such that specialists at a four-year college or university are needed, the technology transfer agent will locate them and put them in contact with the industry.

During the coming year pilot programs will be conducted in nine community colleges: *Central Virginia Community College* in Lynchburg; *New River*, Dublin; *Northern Virginia*, Annandale; *Paul D. Camp*, Franklin; *Southwest Virginia*, Richlands; *Tidewater*, Portsmouth; *Thomas Nelson*, Hampton; *Virginia Western*, Roanoke; and *Wytheville Community College* in Wytheville. If the concept proves to be viable (and we are very optimistic on this point) all community colleges should be involved within the next few years.

Established Programs

The program of service to business and industry at *Tidewater Community College* contains most of the components found in the more vigorous economic development programs. TCC classifies these in seven categories, as follows:

1. *Special Credit Programs* consist of a series of courses over a period of time for employees of a specific business or governmental agency. These courses usually lead to a certificate or degree, and are designed to meet a specific training need.

2. *Contract Programs* provides training for a specific employer. For example, courses provided the Norfolk Naval Shipyard amounted to 258 FTES in the Fall of 1986.

3. *Special Credit Courses* are offered to meet specific training needs at a specific time. In many cases, students enrolled in these courses will continue in a certificate or degree program.

4. *Continuing Education* activities include non-credit seminars, workshops, conferences, etc., that are designed to meet the needs of business and industry.

5. *Special Activities* include activities that address specific needs but are not properly classified as programs, courses, or continuing education activities. Such special activities include guest speakers on radio or TV, volunteers for a variety of organizations, judges for contests, business and industry breakfasts, and the like.

6. *Memberships* in community, civic, and professional organizations provide an avenue to, and a means of communicating with, businesses and industries. TCC credits memberships in such organizations as an important component in its success with the local business and industry community.

7. The *Return to Industry Program* for faculty provides both an opportunity for faculty renewal and an important service to the business community.

Like TCC, *New River Community College* has a broad program of service to business and industry. NRCC has also

(Page 18) NVCC Job Fair brings students and employers together on campus.

(Page 19) NVCC sets up display booths at trade shows such as "Innovations '86."

developed, in partnership with local businesses, a unique *New River Valley Center for Training and Development*. The Center enables businesses to cooperatively sponsor major seminar speakers in the New River Valley and also serves as a clearinghouse for training software and provides needs assessments for area businesses. It functions to make the college the focus of training and human resource development for businesses and industries in the service region. It also serves to make the college more aware of the needs of regional businesses and industries and, thus, to make all programs of the college more responsive to the community.

Northern Virginia Community College was cited for a highly professional *Center for Business and Government Services* which provides comprehensive, cost-effective, and results-oriented human resource development programs. Such services include management development training, basic skills training, technical skills refresher courses, organizational development services, credentialing of internal training programs, employee assistance programs, teleconferencing services, and an international business focus. The Center also publishes a quarterly newsletter, *The Business Connection*, that highlights activities and services that have been provided by the center in recent months.

Southside Virginia Community College was commended both for a very comprehensive program of economic development and for its exemplary *Center for Economic Development*. The Center's program of collaboration between the college and local business, industry, and public organizations, focuses on the following areas:

- Increasing productivity and quality of the working environment of existing business, industry, and public agencies;
- Promoting and enhancing the use of locally produced goods and services as a substitute for goods and services imported from overseas or from outside the area;
- Attracting new business and industry to the community; and
- Educating the general public about economic development.

Blue Ridge Community College is commended for its short-term and long-term *Loaned Executive/Loaned Professional Programs*.

- BRCC defines a loaned executive/loaned professional as an individual paid by one agency to work temporarily for another. The purposes of this program at BRCC are as follows:

1. To increase the college's outreach program;
2. To demonstrate to the public that BRCC cares about the community it serves by sharing resources in areas that would directly benefit the community;
3. To increase the public's awareness of the college's resources and capabilities; and
4. To provide opportunities for faculty and staff to gain experience and become challenged and motivated by their accomplishments.

- The first *long-term loaned executive/loaned professional* program, with the *Augusta Correctional Center*, began almost two years ago and is expected to continue for some time. Both the college and the Augusta Correctional Center have benefited from the arrangement in which a BRCC faculty member has worked closely with the warden since well before the facility opened.
- Assistance to the *United Way Campaign* exemplifies one use of the *short-term loaned executive/loaned professional* program. In this instance a business faculty member, working five to ten hours weekly for three months, assisted the United Way Campaign by:

1. Visiting area businesses and industries to solicit corporate gifts;
2. Assisting businesses and industries with existing employee campaigns; and
3. Beginning new employee campaigns.

The college reports that, in addition to the benefits listed above, the faculty member established contacts in businesses where the students might one day be employed.

Virginia Western Community College has had a long history of working effectively with businesses and industries in the Roanoke Valley. The Institute for Business Development and the Center for Continuing Education have been primary points of contact; however, each of the academic divisions vigorously seeks out opportunities for service. The college cites hard work, reliability, and a dedication to quality as the most important factors in their success.

Marketing Research

Marketing research is the thread that binds a good marketing effort. Just as marketing planning and strategic planning are merely two ways of looking at the same type of planning, marketing research and what we often call institutional research are nearly the same things. The difference, if there is any, lies in the focus of the research and the manner in which the results are used.

We will consider the *Marketing Information System* as four subsystems:

1. The *Internal Records Subsystem* consists of the internal records of the college that are generated in the course of doing business. It contains a wealth of information that is valuable for marketing research, but effort may be required to make the information available for marketing decision-making.

2. The *Marketing Intelligence Subsystem* monitors the current environment. This subsystem requires constant input from a variety of sources ranging from paid newsletters, reports, newspapers, to informal sources such as personal conversations. Information on changes in the local employment rate, economic development in the service region, or competitive activity are all part of a marketing intelligence subsystem.

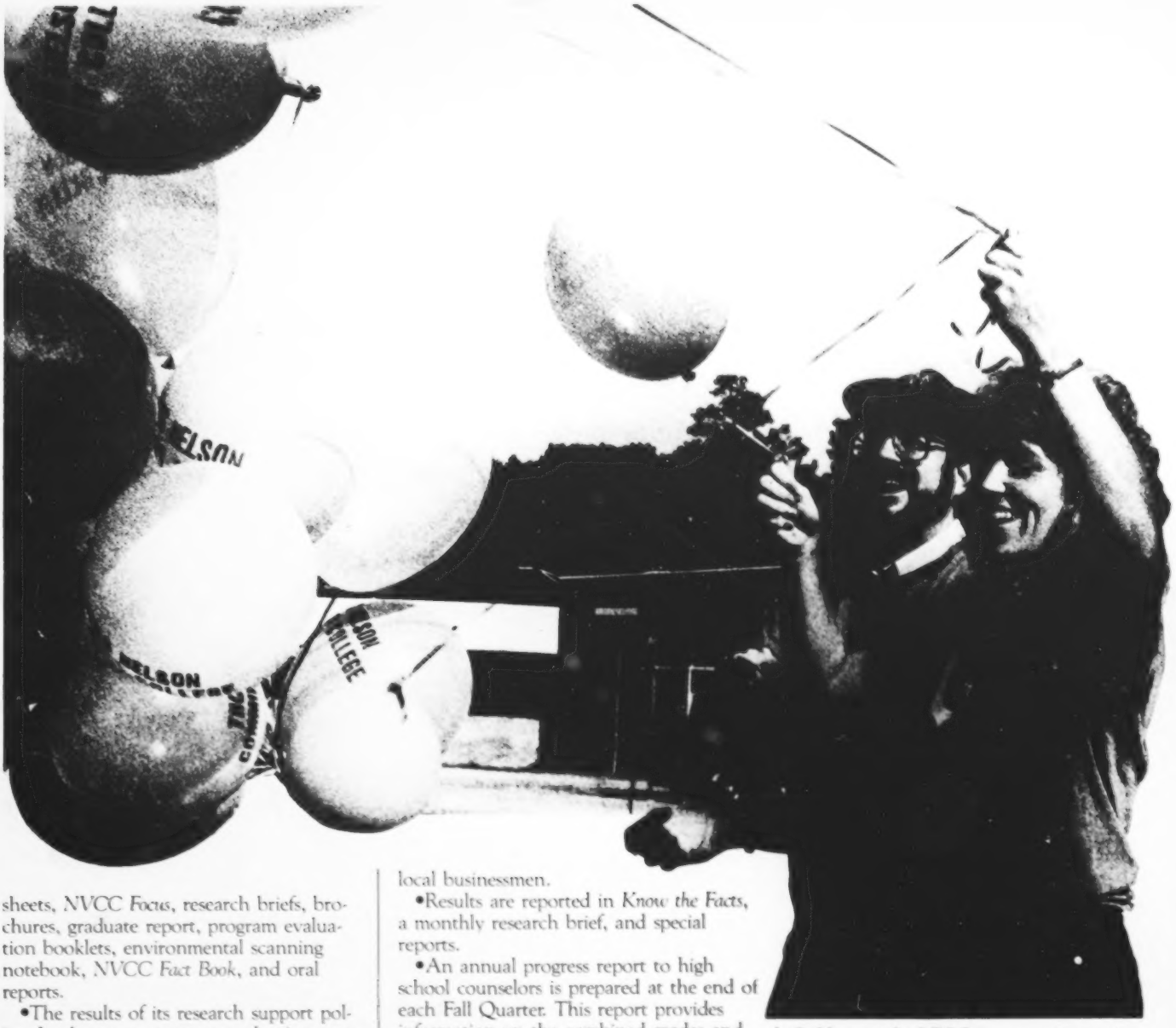
3. The *Analytical Marketing Subsystem* focuses on questions such as "What are some predictors of students predisposed to enrolling in this college?" or "What variables would be useful in segmenting the market?" This subsystem manipulates typical marketing data to predict outcomes, evaluate activities, plan resource allocation, or analyze trends impacting marketing efforts of the college. This component is useful for "what if?" exercises.

4. The *Marketing Research Subsystem* is the final component. Marketing research includes an analysis of all marketing activities such as delivery systems, pricing policies, effect of location, promotion of the college, and quality of the product. Graduate, former student, and employer survey analyses are specific examples of marketing research. Market research, on the other hand, generally pertains to analysis of specific target populations, geographic regions, and needs analysis. Both marketing and market research are vitally important to the Marketing Information System.

The new requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and those of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), both relating to outcomes assessment, will require considerably more sophistication in this important aspect of research than has generally been present in institutions of higher education. It will also produce information that can be of great value in marketing.

All colleges in the VCCS are engaged in some form of marketing research, but the degree of formality and sophistication varies widely. Two colleges, *Northern Virginia Community College* and *John Tyler Community College*, were cited as having unusually comprehensive research programs to support institutional decision-making, including marketing. *Lord Fairfax Community College* was highlighted as a college just now developing and learning to use a comprehensive research capability.

- *Northern Virginia Community College* has, and makes good use of, a professional research capability unrivaled in the VCCS.
- NVCC considers its research to be focused on the interlocking areas of (1) internal environment, (2) awareness and image, and (3) external environment, all leading to an analysis of educational processes and outcomes.
- The results of its research is communicated to NVCC decision-making, faculty, and staff through such vehicles as fact



sheets, *NVCC Focus*, research briefs, brochures, graduate report, program evaluation booklets, environmental scanning notebook, *NVCC Fact Book*, and oral reports.

•The results of its research support policy development, program evaluation, curriculum development, retention strategies, recruiting strategies, promotional activities, resource allocation, and organizational development.

•*John Tyler Community College* also has a comprehensive research effort that is effectively supporting institutional decision-making.

•JTCC reports that "Knowing one's market and knowing how one is responding to that market is the reason for marketing research" and "Marketing research can help to create an awareness in faculty and staff and help to establish goals and objectives that all can support."

•Regular investigations include surveys of current students, nonreturning students, graduates, graduates five years out of JTCC, and employers.

•Special studies include periodic needs assessments and a business and industry survey which included interviews of 103 local businessmen.

•Results are reported in *Know the Facts*, a monthly research brief, and special reports.

•An annual progress report to high school counselors is prepared at the end of each Fall Quarter. This report provides information on the combined grades and grade distributions of students from their school, along with a comparison to the norm for JTCC.

•*Lord Fairfax Community College* added an institutional research position only about two years ago.

•One major initial task was to establish basic profiles of the community and the student body.

•LFCC reports that the basic research questions currently being addressed include:

1. What is the profile of LFCC's student body?
2. How has it changed in the past five years?
3. Why do students come to LFCC?
4. Why do students leave LFCC?
5. How do students find out about LFCC programs and courses?
6. How do students feel about their experience at LFCC?
7. How might LFCC improve its services to students?

•LFCC recently held a series of five Executive Round Table programs sponsored by the College Board. These sessions were patterned upon a similar program conducted at *Central Virginia Community College* several years ago. During these sessions, involving twelve to fifteen persons each, the key questions:

1. What have we done well?
2. What have we done, but not done well?
3. What ought we be doing for you?
4. What might we be able to do together to serve you better?

were discussed. Good minutes were kept, and copies were sent to all participants. A follow-up status report was prepared and distributed six months later.

•The college reports that research results have been very helpful in recent institutional decisions.

Colleges and Programs Cited

The following colleges have been cited for having interesting, innovative, exemplary, or unusually comprehensive programs relating to marketing and retention.

Blue Ridge Community College
Media Relations/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program

Central Virginia Community College
Intervention Systems/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer

Danville Community College
Intervention Systems
(Special Commendation for Original, Exemplary Program)

Germanna Community College
High School Outreach

John Tyler Community College
Prospect and Enrolled Student Tracking/Intervention Systems/Media Relations/Marketing Research

Lord Fairfax Community College
Prospect and Enrolled Student Tracking/Intervention Systems/Marketing Research

Mountain Empire Community College
Financial Aid as a Marketing Tool
(Special Commendation for Original, Exemplary Program)

New River Community College
Organizing for Marketing and Retention/Intervention Systems/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program

Northern Virginia Community College
(Special Commendation for Unusually Comprehensive Program)
Organizing for Marketing and Retention/High School Outreach/Intervention Systems/Media Relations/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program/Marketing Research

Paul D. Camp Community College
Organizing for Marketing and Retention/Media Relations/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer

Piedmont Virginia Community College
High School Outreach
(Special Commendation for Original, Exemplary Program)

Rappahannock Community College
Organization for Marketing and Retention/High School Outreach

Southside Virginia Community College
Special Commendation for Unusually Comprehensive Program)
Organizing for Marketing and Retention/High School Outreach/Media Relations/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program

Southwest Virginia Community College
Financial Aid as a Marketing Tool/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer

Thomas Nelson Community College
Prospect and Enrolled Student Tracking
(Special Commendation for Original, Exemplary Program)
Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer

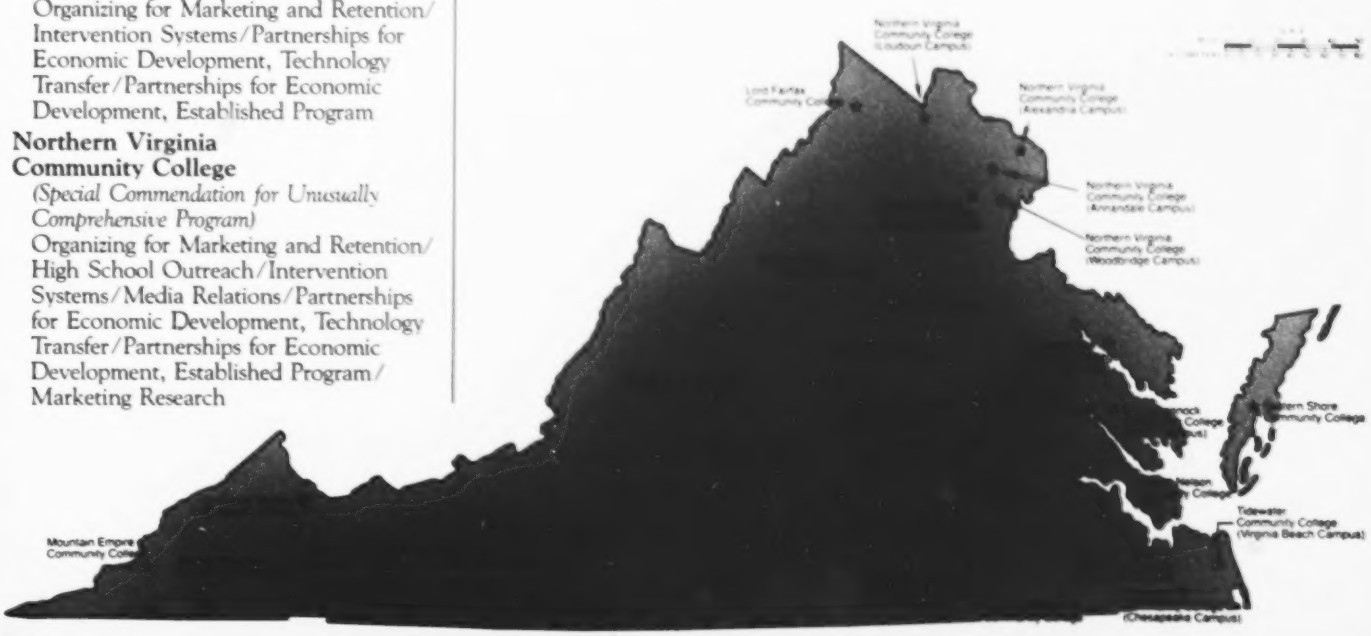
Tidewater Community College
Organizing for Marketing and Retention/Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program

Virginia Highlands Community College
Financial Aid as a Marketing Tool/Prospect and Enrolled Student Tracking

Virginia Western Community College
Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer/Partnerships for Economic Development, Established Program

Wytheville Community College
Partnerships for Economic Development, Technology Transfer

Virginia Community Colleges


Northern Virginia Community College (Loudoun Campus)
Lord Fairfax Community College
Northern Virginia Community College (Alexandria Campus)
Northern Virginia Community College (Annandale Campus)
Northern Virginia Community College (Woodbridge Campus)
Eastern Shore Community College
Tidewater Community College (Virginia Beach Campus)
Mountain Empire Community College
(Chesapeake Campus)

ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges